

**CITY OF BOULDER  
PLANNING BOARD AGENDA ITEM**

**MEETING DATE: December 15, 2005**

**AGENDA TITLE:**

Public hearing and discussion of the Transit Village Area Plan Land Use Concepts and Options Assessment Outline.

**REQUESTING DEPARTMENT:**

Planning and Development Services

Peter Pollock, Planning Director

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Bev Johnson, Environmental Planner

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this item is for Planning Board to discuss and provide input on the Transit Village Area Plan (TVAP) land use and transportation concepts and proposed outline for the Options Assessment prior to staff refining the concepts into options for the public hearing with Planning Board scheduled for January 31.

**BACKGROUND:**

**Process and Schedule**

As was presented to Planning Board on October 27, the Transit Village Area Plan Working Group (made up of Planning Board, City Council and Transportation Advisory Board members) requested that the process be extended in order to allow more time for input on the two land use and transportation concepts from the public, property and business owners, Planning Board, City Council, and the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB).

Based on this additional input (see **ATTACHMENT A** for a list of the meetings held in November and December and open house comments) and the results of a city-wide retail /industrial land use analysis discussed with Planning Board on October 27, staff will refine the concepts and ask for direction from Planning Board, TAB, and City Council at three public hearings (scheduled for February 9, February 13, and February 21 respectively.) Direction at those public hearings will be requested on three specific topics:

1. The land use and transportation concepts
2. The options assessment outline
3. The regional transit context

The schedule below shows the meeting dates for each of the three bodies where each of these three topics will be discussed, and the questions that will be asked at the public hearings:

1. Updates and input to staff on:
  - Land use and transportation concepts and
  - Options Assessment Outline:

TAB: December 12

PB: December 15

CC: January 3

2. Update on the Regional Transit Context

- Regional transit corridors/ US 36 serving Boulder
- Regional integration with local system
- Transit facilities function
- Timing & decision making process with Area Plan, EIS, and RTD

TAB: January 9

CC: January 17

PB: January 19

3. Public Hearing and Direction on:

- Land use and transportation options
- Options assessment outline:
- Regional transit context

PB: February 9

TAB: February 13

CC: February 21

February 9 Planning Board Questions:

1. Do the land use and transportation options represent the range of futures for the Transit Village Area that Planning Board and City Council feel should be considered and analyzed further:
2. Does the outline for the Options Assessment cover the key questions that should be analyzed?

Following direction on the land use and transportation options from Planning Board, City Council, and the Transportation Advisory Board, staff will carry the options forward for the Options Assessment to occur during February and March. The purpose of the assessment would be to compare the discrete land use and transportation options with current trends, which is based on existing land use and zoning. The outline of the assessment is included in this memo for your review.

Upon completion of the options assessment, staff will prepare material for public outreach on the options and the implications of the assessment. This public outreach would occur during April. In May, staff proposes public hearings with City Council,

Planning Board, and the Transportation Advisory Board to provide staff direction on a preferred option for the final plan.

The revised timeline extends the timeline by about five months, with completion by summer of 2006.

**QUESTIONS FOR THE BOARD:**

1. Does Planning Board have comments or input on the land use concepts?
2. Does the Planning Board have any comments on the proposed outline for the assessment? Does the Planning Board have any comments on the questions and factors proposed for the assessment? Is there anything missing from the proposed assessment?

**ANALYSIS:**

**A. Land Use and Transportation Concepts**

In order to develop land use and transportation options, staff is considering all input received on the concepts. (See **ATTACHMENT A** for a summary of public input from the open houses.)

Additional information is being sought on residential, retail and industrial land uses:

- Residential: A staff group will review relevant existing data on housing needs, demographic profiles and housing types. Demographic projections from the State Demographers Office will be incorporated.
- Industrial & Retail: The city has contracted with Economic & Planning Systems (EPS) to evaluate commercial and industrial development potential for the Transit Village Area Plan. EPS will be providing an analysis of additional supportable neighborhood and community commercial space and industrial demand.
- Follow-up staff analysis is being done on parks and recreation needs and flood impacts.

Both concepts reflect a new grid system of local connecting roads, bikeways, and pedestrian routes. In the hub area, a series of connecting public squares or plazas to serve transit users, residents, employees, and shoppers is anticipated. These public spaces could be connected via the Goose Creek multi-use path. Land uses in both concepts are different from current trends, described below. There are differences in land use emphasis between Concept 1 and Concept 2, which are also briefly described below. A more complete description of each concept and current trends is included in **ATTACHMENT B**.

**Current Trends**

Under current land use and zoning, this area is predominantly industrial and includes both service industrial and general industrial uses. There are several distinct areas: the Wilderness industrial area south of Valmont includes some manufacturers, warehousing, and small distribution space; the area around Old Pearl and Frontier Streets is a mix of auto repair, roofing, warehousing and other industrial uses; the area south of the rail lines is a mix of warehousing, industrial service uses, and professional/technical offices. There is also a significant amount of commercial, retail, and office uses along 30th, Pearl, and Arapahoe Streets. In the future there could be an additional 7500 to 8500 jobs under current zoning.

In addition, there could be 1500 additional dwelling units in the area based on current zoning or current policy. The only public neighborhood park serving the area is Scott Carpenter Park at Arapahoe south of 30<sup>th</sup> Street. There are few transportation connections throughout this area for autos, bikes and pedestrians. The Goose Creek multi-use path bisects the area and provides east/west grade separated bike and pedestrian connections, although there are currently limited opportunities for ingress and egress from the path. A few arterials currently serve large industrial and commercial properties.

### **Concept 1**

In this concept residential use was favored as much as possible in order to provide housing for Boulder's existing and growing senior population and future workforce housing including young people who grew up in Boulder. It would maximize Boulder's permanently affordable housing stock, adding at least 1000 new permanently affordable units at the 20 percent permanently affordable requirement. Given the trend for retired residents to remain in their houses while leaving their jobs, an increasing deficit for workforce housing will occur in the future.

Increased population in this area can support some additional retail uses, and this concept includes increased neighborhood-serving retail uses in all four quadrants, mid-box opportunities along 30<sup>th</sup> Street near Twenty Ninth Street, and one possible big box location at Pearl and Foothills. Future industrial uses would be located in fewer locations but at higher intensities. Lower parking requirements to reflect increased transit opportunities would allow increased floor areas. This concept could support higher intensity employment uses, possibly reflecting one or more of Boulder's cluster industry niches, such as natural and environmentally friendly products and services.

More parkland is needed to serve the increased population and relocating the ballfields is being analyzed. This concept would provide the best jobs to population ratio, at .5 to 1, based on an estimated 6,000 jobs and 11,000 new people.

### **Concept 2**

This concept includes additional housing for seniors and employees, but preserves more land for future industrial uses than Concept 1. It includes an additional 2500 housing units or approximately 5500 people; 8,000 future jobs are projected, which is similar to what could occur under current zoning. The difference in nonresidential land uses between this concept and current trends is the future industrial use would be at a higher intensity in this concept using less land. The jobs to population ratio would be 1.5 to 1.

There would be less mixed use development in this concept and more retail along the major corridors. Service commercial uses would be preserved along Valmont. Less parkland would be needed, and the ballfields would remain in their current location. A new park site would be identified in the area south of Walnut. More mixed use industrial would allow opportunities for certain service industrial uses to be co-located with residential uses.

## **B. Options Assessment**

Staff is proposing to assess the options and current trends based on the relevant goals, objectives and direction for the TVAP and Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) policies. Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan policies relevant to comparing and contrasting the options are

included in **ATTACHMENT C**. The TVAP goals, objectives, and direction are included in **ATTACHMENT D**. The options assessment will evaluate the incremental changes relative to current trends and will include an evaluation of potential impacts, including service and facility needs. Fiscal impact to the city's capital and operating budgets will be a central component of the assessment.

### **Outline of Assessment**

Staff's initial take on the assessment and the factors that will be assessed is provided below. This will be refined and may need to be adjusted based on available resources and other factors.

The purpose of the assessment is to evaluate current trends and the area plan options based on the BVCP and TVAP goals, objectives and policies. The analysis will compare the implications of each option relative to anticipated growth under current trends, which is based on the current comprehensive plan, current policy, and zoning. The results of the assessment will be used to inform the preferred direction for the TVAP.

The assessment will include an overview of current trends and each of the options including a summary of projected jobs, population and housing increase. The assessment will be organized based on the policy chapters in the Comprehensive Plan:

- I. General Policies** - The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan is a general statement of the desired long-term future development and preservation of the Boulder Valley and provides the direction for the project. The BVCP also gives specific direction for considering the impacts of growth through the policies summarized below.

This section will include an overall summary of the pros and cons of each of the options and a qualitative assessment of each option relative to city environmental, social, and economic sustainability principles as outlined in the Boulder Comprehensive Plan. This section will try to summarize the sustainability implications of the options based on the results of the assessment of all of the factors in the options assessment.

**A. Questions**

1. Does the option provide significant community benefits and are the negative impacts sufficiently mitigated?
2. Environmental Sustainability: How does each of the options affect the city's long-term goal of reducing use of non-renewable resources and waste production?
3. Economic Sustainability: How does each of the options promote a balanced economic and employment base, a healthy local economy, a desirable quality of life, and high levels of services and amenities for all community members?
4. Social Sustainability: How does each of the options promote social and cultural equity and diversity?

**B. Goals and policies**

Transit Village Area Plan Goals, Objectives and Direction

1. Support diversity by including land use and travel options that expand opportunities for employees and residents of different incomes, ethnicities, demographics, and different abilities.

2. Enhance economic vitality by increasing economic activity for businesses and increasing revenues for the city of Boulder.
3. Create a place that reflects Boulder's commitment to environmental sustainability.

#### Comprehensive Plan Policies

1. Reduce the use of nonrenewable resources and waste production.
2. Promote a viable and balanced economy within the parameters of community land use, environmental and growth policies.
3. Promote a sustainable community by valuing cultural and social diversity and recognizing that inequities create environmental and economic instability.
4. Consider social, economic and environmental impacts in the decision-making process.
5. Limit growth unless sufficient progress is made in reducing negative impacts to an acceptable level and other significant community benefits can be achieved.
6. Development and redevelopment should provide significant community benefits and maintain or improve environmental quality.

**II. Community Design** - The options provide alternative mixes and locations of land uses and development intensity, and can be compared based on overall "community design" criteria. The concepts at this point do not provide detail or differ at this point in terms of urban design characteristics such as: green space, walkability, human scale, street design, connectivity, or other urban design features. However, once they are refined into options they may differ. Furthermore, the options will differ from current trends relative to urban design criteria.

#### A. Questions

1. Does the option respect Boulder's unique community identity and sense of place?
2. Does the option provide a diversity of land uses and densities?
3. Does the option concentrate mixed use and higher density housing in multi-modal corridors and close to transit?
4. Does the option provide neighborhood-serving retail uses in close proximity to housing and jobs?
5. Does the option provide for a "critical mass" of residential uses and creation of neighborhoods, and avoid isolated residential pockets?
6. Does the option focus activities in nodes?

#### B. Factors to assess

1. Land uses and acreage of each
2. Floor Area Ratios and building heights by location; provide comparison to existing and planned areas in city (e.g. downtown, North Boulder)
3. Number of dwelling units and sq. ft. of non-residential development within ¼ mile walk of bus, ½ mile of rail service; located in multi-modal corridors.
3. Number of residential units by location
4. Amount and location of retail/mixed use

### **C. Goals and policies**

#### **Transit Village Area Plan Goals, Objectives and Direction:**

1. Create a pedestrian oriented place.
2. Provide a strong sense of community through the design of street blocks, scale of development, creation of public spaces and the connections to them and variety in scale, land uses, and building types.
3. Maximize the community benefit of the transit investment by locating homes and employment to maximize access to local and regional bus service, future rail, and bus rapid transit and to allow for a transit oriented lifestyle.
4. Include a variety of densities in the area. Higher densities will be most appropriate in the transit hub area and at select locations along multi-modal corridors.
5. Provide neighborhood-serving retail uses in close proximity to housing and jobs.
6. Create neighborhoods rather than scattered isolated pockets of residential uses.

#### **Comprehensive Plan Policies**

1. Respect Boulder's unique and powerful community identity and sense of place.
2. New neighborhoods should include a variety of residential densities, services, shopping, and be designed to foster community interaction.
3. Encourage a variety of land uses in new development.
4. Provide compatibility between adjacent land uses.
5. Provide an acceptable amount of infill and redevelopment; avoid or adequately mitigate negative impacts and enhance the benefits of additional infill and redevelopment.
6. Activity centers where people congregate for working, shopping, going to school or day care, recreating and residing should be distributed throughout the community in focused nodes of concentrated activities at a three scales-- regional, subcommunity, and neighborhood.

- III. Facilities and Services** – A core tenet of the BVCP is that adequate urban facilities and services are a prerequisite to new development and redevelopment, and that growth is expected to pay its own way and to mitigate negative impacts. Assessment of the impact of the options on facilities and services will be based on currently adopted master plans and service standards where they exist. For several city services, the city has adopted a target level of service (LOS) or service standards which are described in corresponding departmental master plans. The options will be assessed as to the degree to which they would meet the adopted level of service standard for that public facility or service. Where the growth associated with an option would diminish the level of service below the adopted standard, the costs associated with making improvements to meet the services standards will be projected. Costs of the facilities and services needed to meet current service standards will be estimated for each option.

Although there are several unfunded capital and operating needs identified by various departments under their current master plans, the assessment will look only at incremental impacts of the options relative to the plans. The assessment will identify

where those current unfunded needs are but primarily seek to quantify the incremental impacts of the options as compared to current trends. The assessment may find that the options may exacerbate current needs or simply create new needs because of the difference between trends under current zoning and the proposed options.

**A. Questions:**

1. What are the impacts to capital facilities of each service (relative to capital needs identified or planned under current trends or under current master plan(s))?
2. What are the services or operating needs resulting from each option?
3. What additional facilities and services would be needed to meet current service standards under each option?
4. What would the cost of those added facilities and services be and would the projected growth (in addition to current trends) adequately pay for those facilities (i.e., projected fees and property, use, and sales taxes)?
5. What is the net budgetary impact?
6. What are the impacts to existing and planned school facilities as a result of anticipated population growth (relative to current trends)?

**B. Factors to assess:**

1. Parks and Recreation
  - Adequacy of overall neighborhood and community park acreage under park service standards.
  - Adequacy of neighborhood park size and location.
  - Staffing needs
2. Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater Utilities
  - Raw and treated water demand and supply
  - Wastewater collection and treatment capacity
  - Stormwater collection and treatment capacity
3. Fire Services
  - Impacts to response times
  - Staffing and equipment needs
4. Police Services
  - Staffing and equipment needs
5. Other Services (Library, Housing and Human Services)
  - Staffing and equipment needs
6. Schools
  - Projected student yield of each option
  - Capacity of schools that would serve the area
  - Access routes to schools

**C. Goals and Policies**

Transit Village Area Plan Goals, Objectives and Direction:

1. Functional public spaces.
2. A plan for city services including innovative approaches to services such as storm water management.



Comprehensive Plan Policies:

1. Adequacy of urban facilities and services.
2. Channeling new development to areas with adequate infrastructure.
3. Growth to pay fair share of new facility costs. When permitting additional development or redevelopment, the city will consider whether public facilities and services are adequate to reasonably maintain current levels of service or service standards
4. The city will consider the importance of the other objectives of the comprehensive plan in the planning and operation of the water, wastewater, stormwater and flood management utilities .
5. Park facilities and services will provide an adequate range of recreational opportunities for its residents.
6. The city and county will work with the Boulder Valley School District to develop safe and convenient pedestrian, bicycle and transit access for students to existing and new schools .

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**IV. Environment**

This section will assess the impact of each option on the natural environment and assess the extent to which various BVCP environmental policies are implemented. Although one of the factors can be assessed quantitatively (air quality) through the transportation impact assessment, the other environmental factors must be assessed qualitatively by looking at land use changes proposed under the options and relative to current trends.

**A. Questions:**

1. What are the potential environmental impacts or constraints of each of the options?
2. To what degree does each option promote environmental sustainability?

**B. Factors to assess:**

1. Air Quality
2. Water Quality (groundwater and stormwater)
3. Brownfield issues
4. Noise (rail, traffic, mixed use conflicts)
5. Floodplain and wetland protection
6. Urban forest protection and enhancement
7. Energy efficiency through land use patterns

**C. Goals and Policies:**

Transit Village Area Plan Goals, Objectives and Direction:

1. Create a place that reflects Boulder's commitment to environmental sustainability and "green" building.
2. Create solutions to mitigate environmental impacts.
3. Develop innovative strategies to promote water efficiency and quality improvements.

Comprehensive Plan Policies:

1. Protect the ecological and functional values of wetlands and floodplains.
2. Support and promote the protection of healthy existing trees and the overall health and vitality of the urban forest.
3. Maintain and improve ground and surface water quality within the Boulder Creek basin. Prevent non-point and point sources of pollution.
4. Reduce stationary and mobile source emissions of air pollutants.
5. Integrate air and water quality planning into the land use and transportation planning, and traffic management processes. Land use patterns that reduce water pollution and air emissions will be encouraged.
6. Encourage the conservation of energy through the placement, orientation and clustering of development and through housing policies and regulations. The conservation of energy is served by the development of more intense land use patterns; the provision of recreation, employment and essential services in proximity to housing; the development of mass transit corridors; and efficient transportation.

**V. Economy**

The city's economic policies are aimed at promoting a vital and healthy economy consistent with the city's other quality of life goals. The Transit Village Area Plan vicinity includes a significant amount of industrial, service, and retail businesses and an estimated 8600 people are employed in the area. Today, 42% of the area is zoned for general industrial uses, 28% for commercial uses, and 11% for service industrial uses. The area contains 22% of the existing general industrial building square footage in the city, 18% of the retail, and 25% of the service industrial building square footage. Industrial uses range from large manufacturing and distribution uses to small technological and service industrial uses that provide vital services to residents and businesses. Retail uses range from large national chain stores to small, locally owned retailers. There is also a cluster of Latino-oriented businesses in the area. Much of the existing retail space in the TVAP area could be considered affordable in relation to retail lease rates in other parts of Boulder.

**A. Questions**

1. To what degree does each option address city-wide industrial, office, service, and retail land use needs as identified in the Land Use Needs Analysis?
2. To what degree does the option provide diverse employment opportunities?
3. Does the option provide adequate opportunities for neighborhood retail and services?
4. Does the option preserve service industrial uses?
5. Does the option support and expand opportunities for minority-owned businesses and other locally owned businesses in the area?
6. Does the option provide opportunities for affordable office space?
7. Does the option provide locations for new mid-box retail uses?
8. Does the option provide adequate opportunities for mixed use?

**B. Factors to assess**

1. Amount, type and location of industrial, office, and retail square footage projected in each option.
2. Number and type of jobs projected for each option.
3. Feasibility of preserving in place or relocating existing service industrial and service commercial uses.

**C. Goals and Policies**

Transit Village Area Plan Goals, Objectives and Direction:

1. Enhance economic vitality by increasing economic activity for businesses and reducing transportation costs for residents and employees.
2. Include multiple employment opportunities and neighborhood-serving retail uses for residents and employees.
3. Preserve some of the service industrial uses in this area or in another location.
4. Support and expand the unique mixture of minority-owned businesses in the area
5. Future retail uses should be pedestrian-oriented neighborhood-serving uses that do not duplicate 29<sup>th</sup> Street. Large format and mid-box retail uses could be located further away from the transit hub area
6. This area is not a particularly strong office location now. The area east of the rail lines and north of Goose Creek (i.e. Wilderness Place) is valuable class B office that could possibly be intensified and reoriented to the rail and Goose Creek. Affordable office locations should be identified.
7. Analyze the area's role in providing different types of industrial uses to help identify the amount and type of industrial land uses that should be in the plan.
8. The future transit investment will result in strong market pressure to convert from service industrial to mixed uses, including residential. The city should work with existing businesses to develop a plan to transition these uses to alternative locations for service industrial uses.

Comprehensive Plan Policies

1. Support a diversified employment base emphasizing scientific, technological and related industries.
2. Support the city's role as a job center.
3. Support the retention, expansion, and entrepreneurial activities of existing local businesses and maintain a positive climate for retail and business.
4. Retain, expand, and attract businesses in identified industry clusters.
5. Provide the opportunity for industries of various types and uses, including those uses considered essential to the community from a service standpoint. Identify areas that should be protected for industrial and office uses. Where appropriate, mixed use development will be encouraged incorporating residential uses and support services for the employment base.
6. Actively support the city's retail base by creating opportunities for mixed use centers incorporating retail, entertainment, office and residential uses served by transit. Develop a retail strategy to address market opportunities and community shopping needs and identify strategies to improve the retail base and sales tax revenues.

## **VI. Transportation**

### **A. Questions**

1. To what degree does the option further the city's priority transportation goals and the area plan goals and objectives?
2. What are the potential traffic impacts?
3. How costly is the option?
4. How feasible is implementation?

### **B. Factors to assess**

1. Existing facilities and travel conditions in the plan area.
2. Travel demand forecasts for each area plan option, based on the different balances of population, employment and land use characteristics.
3. Macroscopic roadway traffic impacts at key links, intersections and access points in the Transit Village area for each option. Potential needed improvements to address the identified impacts, including recommendations for pedestrian, bicycle, bus transit and automobile access and circulation improvements in the area.
4. Planning level cost estimates for the transportation system improvements identified.
5. Three potential Transportation Demand Management packages, including parking strategies, and apply these as appropriate to the individual options to produce modal assumptions for the option and the resulting vehicle travel reductions.
6. Assessment of the implementation requirements for parking and other management programs included in the TDM packages.

### **C. Goals and policies**

#### Transit Village Area Plan Goals, Objectives and Direction

1. Create a pedestrian-oriented place of enduring value.
2. Maximize the community benefit of the transit investment by locating homes and employment to maximize access to local and regional bus service, future rail, and bus rapid transit and to allow for a transit oriented lifestyle.
3. Support diversity by including travel options that expand opportunities for employees and residents of different incomes, ethnicities, demographics, and different abilities.
4. Enhance economic vitality by reducing transportation costs for residents and employees.
5. Include multi-modal access and mobility within the area and to the rest of Boulder.
6. The plan should include solutions to mitigate traffic impacts.

#### Comprehensive Plan Policies

1. Plan multimodal strategies for limiting traffic growth while accommodating increases in anticipated travel. New developments will be required to consider and include travel demand management approaches such as Eco Pass, parking cash out, parking pricing, employer trip reduction programs, flextime and telecommunicating to reduce the Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) produced by the development.
2. Promote the greater use of alternatives to single-occupancy automobiles with the objective of limiting the extent and duration of congestion, defined as Level of Service (LOS) F, to 20 percent of the roadway system within the Boulder Valley while providing for the expected increase in travel demand.
3. The city will actively manage parking supply in the community consistent with the desire to reduce single-occupant vehicle travel and limit congestion. The city will promote parking reductions through parking maximums, shared parking, parking districts and parking management programs where appropriate and taking into account impacts to surrounding areas.
4. New neighborhood streets will be designed in a well connected and fine-grained pattern of streets and alleys to effectively disperse and distribute vehicle traffic and to promote bike and pedestrian travel.

#### **VII. Housing**

The key Transit Village Area Plan goals and objectives and Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan policies that were used to develop the questions and assessment factors for the options assessment are summarized below:

##### **A. Questions:**

1. How much housing is provided in each option? How much affordable housing is provided in each option?
2. To what degree does each option provide a diversity of housing types that have the potential to address the housing needs of people of various incomes, ages, cultures and household types and sizes including: seniors, people with disabilities, owners and renters, first time home buyers, families, and Boulder workers?
3. To what degree does each option address the demand for housing that will be created by projected employment growth?

##### **B. Factors to assess :**

1. Number of new dwelling units
2. Mixture of housing types and household types (families, elderly, etc)
3. Affordability ranges of new dwelling units.
3. Existing and projected jobs to population ratio.

#### Transit Village Area Plan goals and objectives:

1. Support diversity: expand opportunities for employees and residents of different incomes, ethnicities, demographics, and different abilities.
2. Include a mixture of land uses and intensities that meet Comprehensive Plan policies related to jobs/ housing balance and affordable housing. This will

include multiple housing choices, including a variety of housing types at a range of prices from market rate to affordable.

Comprehensive Plan Housing policies:

1. Increase the proportion of permanently affordable housing units to an overall goal of at least ten percent of the total existing housing stock.
2. Encourage a mixture of housing types with varied price ranges and densities to meet the affordability needs of a broad range of the Boulder Valley population. This includes families, essential workers, older adults, persons with disabilities, at-risk children and adults as well as other vulnerable, very low income residents.
3. Expansion of the housing supply should reflect current employer locations, projected industrial/commercial development sites, and the demand such developments bring for housing employees. Key considerations include housing type, mix, and affordability required to house the employee base of current and anticipated employers.

## **VII. Human Services**

### **A. Questions**

Does the option support diversity and further social equity goals by expanding housing, employment, and travel options?

### **B. Factors to assess:**

1. Diversity of employment and housing opportunities provided by each option
2. Public spaces that encourage social interaction among diverse community members.
3. Connectivity within and to surrounding neighborhoods.

Transit Village Area Plan goals and objectives:

1. Support diversity through the inclusion of land use and travel options that expand opportunities for employees and residents of different incomes, ethnicities, demographics, and different abilities.
2. Provide functional public spaces designed to accommodate the needs, aspirations, and celebrations of diverse ethnic groups.
3. Provide multi-modal access and mobility within the area and to the rest of Boulder including the Downtown, Twenty Ninth Street, University of Colorado, other employment centers, Goose Creek path, Valmont Park, and other nearby parks

Approved By:

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Peter Pollock  
Planning Director

**ATTACHMENTS :**

- A: Summary of November and December outreach meetings and comments
- B: Current Trends and two Land Use and Transportation Concepts
- C: Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Policies
- D: Transit Village Area Plan goals, objectives and direction

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**Transit Village Area Plan**

**Summary of Public Outreach  
November & December, 2005**

From 11/01/05 to 12/08/05, the following meetings, open houses and presentations were conducted as part public outreach for the Transit Village Area Plan:

- 11/14/05 Presentation to the Commercial Brokers of Boulder
- 11/15/05 Open House
- 11/22/05 Meeting for Minority Business Owners in the Plan Area
- 11/30/05 Open House
- 12/08/05 Presentation to the Boulder Chamber of Commerce

Comments and feedback provided by attendees of the open house events, minority business meeting and Chamber of Commerce meeting are provided below along with feedback received from the Boulder County Commissioners on December 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Minority Business Owners Meeting**

On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, city Housing Transportation and Planning staff hosted a meeting for minority business owners at the Tortilleria El Rey on Valmont in the plan area. Attendees learned about the area plan process and workshop concepts before discussing their hopes, concerns and ideas for further outreach to minority and business communities in and near the Transit Village area. The following is a summary of feedback received from meeting attendees:

- Large format retailers will push/drive out of business the small locally-owned businesses. Small stores cannot compete with the large ones. (Ex; Wal-Mart)
- Consider a rent stabilization program for small, minority businesses. It's the high rents that cause these businesses to fail, or prevents them from starting up.
- Many minority business people would need help getting through the first few months after starting a new business. Small business loans and special training could help.
- Good support for the Mercado idea. It would provide opportunity to sell for locally -made crafts. Who would sponsor? Need an economic sponsor & to form a group that will work towards implementation. Ideas for implementation might be graduated rents.
- Many in the Hispanic community ride their bikes, and many commute to work, often downtown on the Pearl Street mall. Paths throughout the Transit Village area would be great.
- Some concern about accidents between bikes/peds/cars at Bluff & Valmont.
- Consider public service announcements on Spanish radio from Greeley.
- Consider a meeting on Sunday after mass, provide food. Hundreds would probably attend.



## **November Open House Events**

On November 15 and again on November 30, city staff hosted open houses to provide an additional opportunity for members of the public to review the land use and transportation concepts for the Transit Village area that were first presented on October 17. The two concepts on display were developed by local design teams using a collaborative public workshop process. Each concept represents an alternative vision for the Transit Village area designed to address the City Council and Planning Board defined goals, objectives and direction for the planning process, respond to public comment received at the workshops and generate discussion and feedback on the future of the area. There were 30-50 attendees at each open house session. Most of the 17 attendees who completed formal comment forms thought that the open houses provided helpful information. Their responses to each of three questions are recorded below along with general comments and suggestions for improving future open houses.

### **Comment Form Responses:**

#### **1. What do you like about either of the concepts?**

- I really like the direction of urban development in Boulder. Mixed use is great, nice work.
- My primary comment is on the bike/ped access. The proposed bike/ped features map needs to be implemented for successful use of the village.
- General mixed use is good. Expansion of transit, bikeways is good. Overall concept 2 seems more likely-southern section will be hard/slow to change from industrial to employment areas.
- There is a need for “form based planning” to allow the transition period (which will be many years) to allow many different stages & types of use.
- I like the residential in concept #1
- Relatively high density, walkability, lots of transit.
- Concept #1 show residential along the rail line- that is a non-starter. Concept #2 has business & commercial next to the rail-much better.
- Use of the depot as a “community space”; attention to livability issues like scale, use of buildings, materials, landscaping, etc.
- Not much difference.
- The fact that both increase housing and mixed use in the area. The fact that both make the area more pedestrian/bike friendly. The fact that both include some public spaces & more trails. The fact that the plans will put housing & businesses in easy access to the bus & train. Perhaps less people will drive.
- Through streets & mixed uses.
- Both seem well thought out & well conceived. Like: the emphasis on paths (bike/ped), the train and bus depot concepts. Prefer the option with more residential growth.
- Decent connectivity between train station & 29<sup>th</sup>. Old depot is a good place.
- I like both concepts. They represent a fresh approach to land use. Both make good use of the Jaycee depot. I like 1 a little better than 2.
- I think concept #2 is better than concept #1, because we need more commercial buildings and business in town.

## **2. What don't you like about either of the concepts?**

- My concern is that the industrial type uses can remain and in an affordable way. We need all types of business and need to remain competitive. I hope zoning can make this possible.
- We have got to be able to get there easily without a car. Most important are the 28<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup>/Pearl St. underpasses.
- Concept 2 putting residential on NW 30<sup>th</sup>/Pearl corridor- who would want to live there? It's already the parking lot from hell/ I don't see that improving. I'd say that corner will be better mixed business.
- I wanted to see an "idea on "what out put it would be and ignoring what is already there. This was a good reference for a good real plan.
- I don't like the idea about the box store.
- Big box- this concept may soon be a dinosaur due to high gasoline prices that push consumers to change their habits.
- The density strikes me as way over the top. Suitable for NYC but not for Boulder. Commuter parking appears to be very inadequate. Most people are, for better or for worse, wedded to their cars.
- Narrow streets where bikes and cars share lanes unless the traffic volume is exceedingly low. Blinking light crossings to get pedestrians across Arapahoe. Too much traffic moving too fast. Need an underpass or overpass.
- The location of the train station is terrible. It offers very poor parking and transfer to local bus service. Offer RTD opportunity to purchase Sutherland's land and give up the land it owns.
- The area is too big. Transportation should be driving this plan NOT land use. The area around the bus station should wait until the EIS is done.
- No sense of neighborhoods or character. Strange scale transitions. Pearl & Canyon very weak for such strong streets. Bus & Train separate, should be stacked bus under.
- Need better ped/bike links from 29<sup>th</sup> St. Mall in all directions. Need to ensure good bike/ped into south and west from bus/train depot (make sure the residential developers are on board)
- Parking should not be in prominent location near regional bus terminal. Don't call it a parking structure.
- Very little. I think rail and bus should be kept apart.
- It is good to use more underground spaces for big parking spaces.

## **3. What's missing from either or both concepts?**

- More depiction of how light rail will fit in.
- A trolley or people mover between the bus and rail facilities would assist with transit connections while still supporting a strong pedestrian realm.
- I know any plan needs a boundary but I think Pearl and Walnut east should be more included. As Walnut dead ends and Pearl & Foothills Park and Ride is obsolete, they will redevelop some and these areas will be impacted.
- I would like to see the relationship to the entire city and what pressure are influencing "what it ought to be."
- On/off ramps at Walnut and Foothills.

- Connectivity to downtown! The transit village will become the new downtown and center of gravity in Boulder. Mass transit connection to downtown (free like Denver's mall shuttles is important). In a similar vein local bus service will need to be revamped so that it is not necessary to go downtown.
- Indoor recreation space and community space in lower quadrant of area. We need another small rec center to encourage residents to recreate locally rather than driving to one of the existing rec centers. New housing density may necessitate additional indoor recreation facility. Convenient, save way for pedestrians/bicyclists to get to Scott Carpenter Park. Convenient connection for employees in middle part of East campus e.g. RL3 (high rise) to get to creek path. Right now only a muddy path exists at south edge of CU parking lot.
- I question the energy efficiency of commuter rail cars vs. buses.
- Transportation (local) connections with bus and rail. The transfers should be seamless. Don't make people walk to local transit.
- Please consider including senior housing.
- Vision. Character. Lack of weave into major street structure city wide. E.g. Pearl Grid ignored octagonal block scale ignored. Sense of place weak.
- Underground train in hub and try is symbol that represents Boulder. There is no dense high rise 10-12 story of mixed use but mainly residential. No indication of solar, no bike paths.
- Again, very little. At this point they represent well thought out ideas for a new town center for Boulder.
- If we could not use huge spaces for parking, then can we use them for underground bus?

#### **Other Posted Comments:**

##### **General**

- I am interested in a property at 3620 Walnut and would like to attend focus meetings for this area.
- Move 38<sup>th</sup> to east, put industrial on both sides of road. Change road for future industrial.
- The long distance between RTD & train platform still doesn't make sense. The transit center should be user-friendly not user-challenging. If we want to make it a vibrant center, where is the "center?" Train platforms or RTD station? Two competing "vibrant centers." Won't be vibrant.
- Transportation seems to be getting lost in this big land use plan. Why not focus on the core land please, make it one transportation core, not two. This requires getting together closely NOW with RTD, CDOT & fed transportation folks. Then plan the land uses around transportation. Leaving planning for the outer edges of the area plan area for later. It is important to first get the transportation center right first.
- If I come back by bus after a day's work, I'd like to pick up groceries, dry-cleaning, etc. right at the station, then hop in my car or another bus and go home or walk home if I live close. But I don't want to push a grocery cart 1/3 mile back to the bus station from the "vibrant" retail center closer to the train.

**Concept 1**

- The Old Pearl Area is currently mainly distribution/warehouse.
- Encouraging redevelopment of Pearl and Foothills seems good . . . is big box the best option?

**Concept 2**

- This feels much more comfortable ped/friendly that current uses. Current uses aren't very industrial, wouldn't be displaced.
- Properties along 30<sup>th</sup> should include retail. Should mixed-use on both sides of street (Old Pearl)
- I like mix of housing & keeping small scale industrial uses. Not sure road over Goose Creek is important (29<sup>th</sup> Street near Bluff).
- Really like scale of blocks in 28<sup>th</sup> & Valmont Area.

**Public Suggestions for Improving the Open House:****What changes would you suggest for future open house events?**

- Need to be in East Boulder near impacted community. How about at the cop shop on 33<sup>rd</sup>. And more staff available. Some great concepts. It's an area ripe for improvement Yes! Put the bike path along the train, especially to the south. For those of us living north east and working on east Walnut this will be a fantastic way to get to work. Living in Niwot. I currently drive to Table Mesa to bus to Denver. It looks like we'll get some great interim options for bussing to transit village then continuing to Denver. Now I can drive from T Mesa home by the time the Bus gets into Boulder. As streets in southeast section are redeveloped, please make very ped/bike friendly. It's an awkward area at the moment.
- Give each person 3-4 green pins and with 3 or 4 red pins and ask them to locate with green pins 2 or 3 places they would love to live and locate with red pins where they would hate to live, then discuss why. There is a big need to clarify what is industrial and industrial mixed use. If it is small start-ups and kind of home businesses that is great and I would like to live there, but the term industrial should be changed to maybe light industrial and live work places "open to professionals, artists as well as motorcycle repair shops. In general, I can conceive of a place or places that I would really want to live. I can't conceive or understand from the presentation what the character of each neighborhood is to be. I get that feeling that I am looking at a new "isolated" city or a "walled city" that exists on its own.
- In a similar vein local bus service will need to be revamped so that it is not necessary to go downtown.
- One on one discussion was very helpful.
- Give a formal presentation. I am very disappointed with the location of the train station. It addresses pedestrian and bus-transfer issues very poorly.
- None. This was a great meeting to gather information and ask questions. I think it is wonderful that the city is looking to redesign this area, especially in conjunction with the increased public transportation \*bus and train) that will be coming to this area. Also, the opportunity for increased housing area is a great idea. Hopefully it will cut into the increased traffic that we can expect from

people commuting in from Weld to Boulder City. Maybe they will choose to live here instead. Also, please do all you can to make the area pedestrian & bicycle friendly? And to forget the ever increasing need for senior housing.

- Very good - important senior staff present & young hands on detail staff present. Excellent! There may be people in Boulder who are more visionary than the designer & planners who have done the work so far – plans seem too timid for an early visionary process. I'm not sure why the process didn't capture more vision – it could have. Perhaps the questions were limited up front? But they seemed pretty open . . . actually; it's the designers who failed to push the envelope? I'm not sure. Perhaps the next phases can attempt to raise the bar, rather than just detail these rather timid schemes? The site has potential to accommodate many building types & neighborhood characters not currently present in Boulder – real warehouse loft. Mixed-use for example. I hope the process will continue to explore and seek more exciting options.
- Great Job!
- Serve Champagne! A nice relaxed atmosphere, great staff presents. Let people not different land. Show 5 other built transit village photos and use densities and record their preferences etc.
- Let the Jaycees host one at the depot! Restoration of the shelter or the Historical Jaycee Train Depot has value. It will create open sheltered space in the park for additional uses and enhance the historic appearance of the Depot. Please keep the Jaycees (or other community group) in mind to manage the space for the public's use. The teahouse or Mustard's serve as a proven model.

**Was the 3-D model helpful in understanding the concepts for the area?**

- Not in the present form. The color illustrative are better at this time.
- Seemed hard to get involved and figure out so I skipped it. It looks to be web accessible which is a good option.
- Not really.
- Overhead models are better for the big picture. 3-D was better for specific areas.
- Very!
- Really Great- more detail would be nice, like to see existing identified.
- Not particularly. Seems to me to be a costly extravagance.
- Extremely.
- Yes, it's fabulous!
- It was clever. Better than 2-D graphics. It needs main walking and biking routes included. It should show winter conditions as well as summer.
- Very. I'm a tech guy. Great to see the technology put to use.
- Yes.

**Public Comments Emailed in Response to the Open House Events:**

>>> "Steven Peters" 11/28 1:33 PM >>>

Louise,

I have some concerns as input for the Boulder Transit Village Plan.

1. The concept plans do not include schools. (I mentioned this to you before but thought it would be to include again.) I would think that even at the concept level the addition of that many residents would require the inclusion of space for corresponding school facilities. I live in the Kings Ridge community east of Foothills and north of Valmont and no schools are located there either.
2. I think more weight should be given to businesses that are just east of Foothill Pkwy and how they can access the area. Two bike path underpasses are included but more seems necessary.
3. I think more weight should be given to the residential communities that are just east of Foothill Pkwy and north of Valmont (Kings Ridge area) and how they can access the transit areas.
4. I imagine that the number of times trains will cross Pearl St and Valmont will significantly add to the disruption of auto, bike, and pedestrian traffic on those streets.

Steve

Resident in the Kings Ridge community

Work east of Foothills off Pearl

Member of the Board of Boulder East TMO

>>> "Lesley Kinder" 11/29/2005 8:34:07 PM >>>

Abe,

My input is - go for it!!! Great idea for Boulder, and long overdue! Whatever you propose will be met with endless "process" delays, but don't let it get you down. I think this will be a great improvement to the Boulder lifestyle... Keep up the good work!!!

**Lesley Kinder**

*Race Director*

*Nike Boulder Backroads Marathon & Half Marathon*

PO Box 1889, Boulder, CO 80306

>>> Stuart Grogan 12/01 9:45 AM >>>

Louise:

Great open house ... I think you were right that there is a lot of information and ideas in the two concepts ... I for one appreciate the change to come back after the meetings for another look ... thank you.

Couple ideas and comments:

1. I think the only reason to add roads, behind the Y and through the Mapleton ballfields, on either side of Whole Foods is overdoing it unless you were going to eliminate some of all of the

parks in the area and really jack up the housing density .... otherwise, I think it just cuts up some really nice unbroken open areas that enhance the quality of those sub areas ....

2. I think preserving the Industrial Uses in Concept #2 along the west side of the Foothills Parkway is excellent. But Industrial areas have their own traffic patterns and needs that are different, and sometimes in conflict, with residential areas, even mixed use areas. The roads serving the Industrial Areas in SoWa need a little rejigging to assure commercial success as well as minimize conflicts like:

- As you travel north from Arapahoe towards the old Exabyte sites, the "entrance" to the industrial area should be really clear and sized for industrial traffic .... it should be really easy to get into and out of that area in a way that does not impact or constrain the residential areas ...
- I think the easterly loop that roughly parallels Foothills should be enhanced and continue north across the railroad through the industrial areas to Pearl ... that should be the linkage for all the industrial traffic ...
- The other streets in this area should link to this street but the plan should help the industrial areas be good neighbors and minimize potential conflicts ...
- If you did that with the street, it would make it easier to convert more of the area and the north end of 33rd St around Walnut to residential

3. I think the redevelopment of the SE corner of Valmont and 28th should be stronger ... the plan anticipates redevelopment of the whole block ... if you do that, the building on the corner should be a more significant presence especially since the plumbing supply and flower store on the opposite corner will likely redevelop as well

4. I like the conversion of the area west of the tracks in the NE corner of the plan to mixed use with strong residential uses and the area bounded by the Wonderland and the ditch north of Pearl on old Pearl for mixed use residential ... both of those areas could be really terrific feeders into the commercial and industrial and transit areas of the plan

5. I think the 32nd St. connection through the plan area needs to be a stronger more substantial linkage

6. I would encourage you to enhance and strengthen the connection of Canyon from the west into the SoWa residential area.

7. The underpass south of Valmont under Foothills is an excellent idea but might be pretty difficult to implement for cars but making that link to the Valmont park for peds and bicycles would terrific!

If I think of anything else, I will let you know. Thank you for all your efforts on this planning project!

Stuart Grogan  
P: 720.564.4644  
F: 303.544.9553

>>> "Erv Bell" 12/02 1:13 PM >>>

Mr. Mole

I am the architect who had the pleasure of briefly exchanging some comments with you at the planning staff open house on Wednesday evening. After we spoke I stopped at the transportation spot manned by the transportation planner. There was a young woman who innocently asked, "How does this plan (the Transit Village Area Plan) work? How does it come to be?" The planner briefly described the process for each project that may arise in the next 50 years. Each project would be reviewed under the new Transit Area Plan. So it would be a gradual and continuing process for many years. This exchange of question and answer hit home an idea that I strongly urge the planning staff and Planning Board to consider. It is:

Design the zoning as "Form Based Zoning or Form Based Planning". This is a relatively new concept in the planning world that basically defines the acceptable form or envelope of each zone and allows the uses to be varied and change over time. This would realistically add to the response to the young woman's question of how the TVP would become real and change over time. Form Based Planning is being used by many cities around the country. It is not purely a single formula for a universal solution. It has to be shaped or modified for the particular city. I strongly recommend that Boulder considers it as a basis of TRV.

I will send a copy to Louise Grauer, TVA staff planner

Thanks for your attention to this thought.

Erv Bell

Ervin Bell



### **Presentation to the Boulder Chamber of Commerce**

On December 8, city planning staff updated members of the Boulder Chamber of Commerce on the Transit Village Area Plan, answered questions and received feedback. The following is a summary of comments made by attendees of the meeting:

### **Presentation to the Boulder County Commissioners**

On December 1<sup>st</sup>, city staff updated the Boulder County Commissioners on the progress of the Transit Village Area Plan and received the following summarized direction and feedback:

- Think about increasing the required percentage of permanently affordable housing from 20 percent for this area
- Look at a range of parking alternatives, including paid parking, parking districts, reduced parking ratios
- Consider select locations for “car-free” housing which would be more affordable
- This is an appropriate location for higher density housing where services are available and where auto use could be reduced, as opposed to on the outskirts of town
- If the city chooses to use TIF as a means of financing, don’t impact the county; share back with the county any county portion of property tax. The county provides many services to residents and relies on property tax. Residents will be constituents of both the city and the county

**ATTACHMENT B**

**Select Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Policies**

**General Policies**

**1.02 Principles of Environmental Sustainability.**

There are limits to the capacity of the biosphere to support the life of human beings at current levels of consumption and pollution. There are limits to the land and soil available for food production, to available water, to resources such as trees, fish and wildlife, to industrial resources like oil and metals, and to the ability of nature to absorb our waste.

With this in mind, the city and county acknowledge the importance of natural capital, which can be kept at healthy levels for the long term only when we are able to do the following:

- a) Renewable resources should not be used faster than they are recharged or replenished by the environment.
- b) Non-renewable resources should be used with the greatest care and efficiency, and some of those should be used to develop renewable replacements.
- c) Waste should not be dumped into nature any faster than nature can absorb it.

**1.03 Principles of Economic Sustainability.**

- a) The city and county will encourage a viable and balanced economic structure and employment base within the parameters of established land use, environmental and growth policies.
- b) The city and county recognize that a healthy, adaptable local economy is vital to the community's ability to provide a highly desirable quality of life, high levels of services and amenities.
- c) The city and county will promote a diverse and sustainable economy that supports the needs of all community members.
- d) The city and county will seek to ensure that current needs are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs, for the economy is a subsystem of the environment and depends upon the environment both as a source of raw material inputs and as a sink for waste outputs.

**1.04 Principles of Social Sustainability.**

The city and county will promote a healthy, sustainable community by:

- a) Recognizing, respecting, and valuing cultural and social diversity.
- b) Recognizing that social and cultural inequities create environmental and economic instability.
- c) Ensuring the basic health and safety needs of all residents are met.
- d) Providing infrastructure that will encourage culturally and socially diverse communities to both prosper within and connect to the larger community.

**1.08 Consideration of Environmental, Economic and Social Impacts.**

The city and the county will consider social, economic and environmental impacts in the legislative decision-making process.

**1.17 Growth Projections.**

In order to ensure that past and projected growth impacts can be better mitigated or avoided, and to maintain a desirable community size, the city shall set projections for population and employment for the year 2030. Projected growth will be limited unless sufficient progress is made in reducing the cumulative negative growth impacts to an acceptable level and other significant community benefits can be achieved.

**1.18 Growth Requirements.**

The overall effect of urban growth must add significant value to the community, improving quality of life. The city will require development and redevelopment as a whole to provide significant community benefits and to maintain or improve environmental quality as a precondition for further housing and community growth.

**Community Design**

**2.12 Neighborhoods as Building Blocks.**

The city and county will foster the role of neighborhoods to establish community character, provide services needed on a day-to-day basis, foster community interaction, and plan for urban design and amenities. All neighborhoods, whether residential areas, business districts, or mixed land use areas, should offer unique physical elements of neighborhood character and identity, such as: distinctive development patterns or architecture; historic or cultural resources; amenities such as views, open space, creeks, irrigation ditches, and varied topography; and distinctive community facilities and business areas.

**2.18 Mixture of Complementary Land Uses.**

The city and county will strongly encourage, consistent with other land use policies, a variety of land uses in new developments. In existing neighborhoods, a mixture of land use types, housing sizes and lot sizes may be possible if properly mitigated and respectful of neighborhood character. Wherever land uses are mixed, careful design will be required in order to ensure compatibility, accessibility and appropriate transitions between land uses that vary in intensity and scale.

**2.19 Compatibility of Adjacent Land Uses.**

In order to avoid or minimize noise and visual conflicts between adjacent land uses that vary widely in use intensity or other characteristics, the city will use tools such as interface zones, transitional areas, site and building design and cascading gradients of density in the design of subareas and zoning districts. With redevelopment, the transitional area should be within the zone of more intense use.

**2.20 Design of Newly-Developing Areas.**

The city will encourage a neighborhood concept for new development which includes a variety of residential densities, opportunities for shopping, nearby support services and

conveniently sited public facilities, including roads and pedestrian connections, parks, libraries, and schools.

**2.21 Mixed Use.**

The city will encourage well designed mixed use development that incorporates a substantial amount of affordable housing in appropriate locations, including some commercial centers, corridors, and industrial areas. In reviewing mixed use projects, the city will consider impacts to adjacent neighborhoods.

**2.25 Subcommunity and Area Planning.**

Subcommunity and area planning and other efforts will be geared toward defining the acceptable amount of infill and redevelopment and standards for design quality in order to avoid or adequately mitigate negative impacts and enhance the benefits of additional infill and redevelopment.

**2.27 Variety of Activity Centers.**

The city and county support a variety of regional, subcommunity and neighborhood activity centers where people congregate for a variety of activities such as working, shopping, going to school or day care, recreating and residing. Activity centers distributed throughout the community in focused nodes of concentrated activities at a three scales--regional, subcommunity, and neighborhood--are key elements of the overall city structure (See description at the beginning of this chapter). Activity centers should be located within walking distance of neighborhoods and business areas and designed to be compatible with surrounding land uses and intensity and the context and character of neighborhoods and business areas. Good multi-modal connections to and from activity centers will be encouraged.

**Facilities and Services**

**3.02 Definition of Adequate Urban Facilities and Services.**

- a) 'Adequate facilities and services' for new urban residential development means the availability of public water, public sewer, stormwater and flood management, urban fire protection and emergency medical care, urban police protection, urban transportation, developed urban parks, and schools based upon the criteria set forth in subparagraph (c) below.
- b) 'Adequate facilities and services' for new urban industrial and commercial development means the availability of public water, public sewer, stormwater and flood management, urban fire protection and emergency medical care, urban police protection, and urban transportation, based upon the criteria set forth in subparagraph (c) below.
- c) The availability and adequacy of urban facilities and services as set forth in subparagraphs (a) and (b) above will be determined based upon the following criteria and as further defined in the Urban Service Criteria and Standards section of this plan. Determinations of facilities and services adequacy will be based upon the following criteria:
  - (i) Responsiveness to public objectives
  - (ii) Sufficiency and dependability of financing
  - (iii) Operational effectiveness

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- (iv) Adequacy of equipment and facilities
- (v) Proficiency of personnel

**3.04 Channeling Development to Areas with Adequate Infrastructure.**

In order to protect and use past investments in capital improvements, new development and redevelopment will be located in areas where adequate public services and facilities presently exist or are planned to be provided under the city's Capital Improvements Program.

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**3.05 Growth to Pay Fair Share of New Facility Costs.**

Since the public costs of annexation and developing several areas concurrently could prove excessive, the city will limit said costs to those, which can reasonably be accommodated within the Capital Improvements Program and are compatible with anticipated revenues. When permitting additional development or redevelopment, the city will consider whether public facilities and services are adequate to reasonably maintain current levels of service or service standards given the impacts of such additional development or committed funding sources for such adequate facilities are sufficient to ensure their provision in a timely fashion. Growth will be expected to pay its own way, with the requirement that new development pay the cost of providing needed facilities and an equitable share of services including affordable housing, and to mitigate negative impacts such as those to the transportation system.

**3.10 Utility Provision to Implement Community Goals.**

The city will consider the importance of the other objectives of the comprehensive plan in the planning and operation of the water, wastewater, stormwater and flood management utilities. These other objectives include in-stream flow maintenance, enhancement of recreational opportunities, water quality management, preservation of natural ecosystems, open space and irrigated agricultural land, and implementation of desired timing and location of growth patterns.

**3.12 Parks and Recreation.**

Park facilities and services of the city or other service entities will provide an adequate range of recreational opportunities for its residents. Such facilities and services will be designed in a manner that responds to the needs of the intended users. City park and recreation facilities will provide a variety of landscape types as amenities and recreational resources for urban dwellers, including irrigated green spaces, low water-need plantings and natural vegetation areas.

**3.14 Trails Network.**

The city and county will coordinate with other trail providers and private landowners in trail system planning, construction, management and maintenance. Where compatible with environmental protection goals and conservation easement agreements, trail connections will be developed to enhance the overall functioning of the trails network.

**3.23 Planning for School Sites and Facilities.**

The city and county will assist the Boulder Valley School District in obtaining usable sites for new schools in advance of needs. The city and county will consider current and projected school enrollment and available school capacities when approving the type,

scale and timing of residential development. The city and county will also consider transportation impacts when planning for school sites and facilities.

The city will work with the Boulder Valley School District when practicable to cooperatively plan for joint facilities and shared use of parkland, recreation and outdoor facilities, meeting rooms and classrooms, branch libraries and other facilities.

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### **3.24 — Accessibility to Schools.**

The city and county will work with the Boulder Valley School District to develop safe and convenient pedestrian, bicycle and transit access for students to existing and new schools. New school facilities will be located so that school-age children have the opportunity to arrive safely on their own.

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## **Environment**

### **4.09 Wetland Protection.**

Natural and human-made wetlands are valuable for their ecological and, where appropriate, recreational functions, including their ability to enhance water and air quality. Wetlands also function as important wildlife habitat, especially for rare, threatened and endangered plants and wildlife. The city and county will continue to develop programs to protect and enhance wetlands in the Boulder Valley. The city will discourage the destruction of wetlands, but in the rare cases when development is permitted and the filling of wetlands cannot be avoided, new wetlands will be created or degraded wetlands will be restored.

### **4.13 Urban Environmental Quality.**

To the extent possible, the city and county will seek to protect the environmental quality of areas under significant human influence such as agricultural and urban lands and will balance human needs and public safety with environmental protection. The city will develop community-wide programs and standards for new development and redevelopment so that negative environmental impacts will be mitigated and overall environmental quality of the urban environment will not worsen and may improve.

### **4.14 Urban Forests.**

The city will support and promote the protection of healthy existing trees and the overall health and vitality of the urban forest in the planning and design of public improvements and private development. The city will encourage overall species diversity and native and low water demand tree species where appropriate.

### **4.20 Preservation of Floodplains.**

Undeveloped floodplains will be preserved or restored where possible through public land acquisition of high hazard properties, private land dedication and multiple program coordination. Comprehensive planning and management of floodplain lands will promote the preservation of natural and beneficial functions of floodplains whenever possible.

**4.22 Non-Structural Approach.**

The city will seek to preserve the natural and beneficial functions of floodplains by emphasizing and balancing the use of non-structural measures with structural mitigation. Where drainageway improvements are proposed, a non-structural approach should be applied wherever possible to preserve the natural values of local waterways while balancing private property interests and associated cost to the city.

**4.23 Protection of High Hazard Areas.**

The city will prevent redevelopment of significantly flood-damaged properties in high hazard areas. The city will prepare a plan for property acquisition of flood-damaged and undeveloped land in high hazard flood areas. Undeveloped high hazard flood areas will be retained in their natural state whenever possible. Compatible uses of riparian corridors, such as natural ecosystems, wildlife habitat and wetlands will be encouraged wherever appropriate. Trails or other open recreational facilities may be feasible in certain areas.

**4.26 Protection of Water Quality.**

Water quality is a critical health, economic and aesthetic concern. The city and county will protect, maintain and improve water quality within the Boulder Creek basin and Boulder Valley watersheds as a necessary component of existing ecosystems and as a critical resource for the human community. The city and county will seek to reduce point and nonpoint sources of pollutants. Special emphasis will be placed on regional efforts such as watershed planning and protection.

**4.30 Storm Water.**

The city and county will protect the quality of its surface waters, meet all state and federal requirements for storm water quality and evaluate additional voluntary standards as appropriate.

**4.32 Groundwater.**

The city and county will continue to evaluate aquifers, groundwater recharge and discharge areas, and sources of groundwater pollution within the Boulder Creek watersheds and formulate appropriate pollution and source protection programs. Impacts to groundwater will be considered in land use planning, development review and public land management practices.

**4.33 Pollution Control.**

The city and county will seek to control both point and non-point sources of water through pollution prevention, improved land use configurations, wetland detention areas, erosion control and other construction standards, standards to control degradation of streams and lakes caused by storm runoff in urban and rural areas, and control and monitoring of direct sources of discharge, including those of gravel extraction and wastewater treatment facilities.

**4.35 Protection of Air Quality.**

Air quality is a critical health, economic and aesthetic concern. The city and county will maintain full compliance with federal air quality standards and reduce stationary and mobile source emissions of pollutants. Special emphasis will be placed on local and



regional efforts to reduce pollutants, which cause adverse health effects and impair visibility. (See Policy 1.11 Regional and Statewide Cooperation.)

**4.36 Greenhouse Gas Emissions.**

The city and county will identify and implement cost-effective actions that will reduce the community's contribution to total global greenhouse gas emissions. The initial goal is to be in alignment with the Kyoto Protocol target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions seven percent below 1990 levels. Reducing emissions requires integration of land use, building code, transportation and energy supply policies.

**4.37 Integration of Water and Air Quality with Transportation Planning.**

The city and county will integrate air and water quality planning into the land use and transportation planning, and traffic management processes. Land use patterns that reduce water pollution and air emissions will be encouraged. The city and county will consider strategies to reduce impacts to air and water quality through water quality protection measures, stabilization of soils, appropriate monitoring of construction and mining operations, and minimization of exposure to both mobile and stationary sources of air pollution. The city and county will promote transportation strategies encouraging low emission vehicles, alternatives to traditional fuels and travel in single-occupant vehicles. (See Policy 6.15 Improving Air Quality.)

**4.40 Energy-Efficient Land Use.**

The city and county will encourage the conservation of energy through land use policies and regulations governing placement, orientation and clustering of development and through housing policies and regulations. The conservation of energy is served by the development of more intense land use patterns; the provision of recreation, employment and essential services in proximity to housing; the development of mass transit corridors; and efficient transportation.

**Economy**

**5.01 Economic Vitality.**

Economic vitality in Boulder will be pursued through a partnership among the public, private, and non-profit sectors. The city's primary contribution is through the provision of efficient processes and procedures required for site development, the investment in municipal infrastructure, and consideration of other initiatives on a case-by-case basis. The city will adopt economic vitality programs and strategies that foster innovation, enhance competitiveness, and expand markets.

The city and county will support a diversified employment base within the Boulder Valley, reflecting manpower and labor force capabilities and recognizing amenities for emphasizing scientific, technological and related industries. Inclusion of elements in the economic vitality program should enhance the community's role in the global and domestic marketplace.

**5.02 Regional Job Center.**

The city is one of several job centers in the region and significant additional employment growth is projected in the future. The city will adopt policies and strategies that support the city's role as a job center in the future.

**5.03 Support for Local Business.**

The city and county recognize the significant contribution of existing businesses in the local economy. The city will support the retention, expansion, and entrepreneurial activities of existing local businesses and maintain a positive climate for retail and business.

**5.04 Industry Clusters.**

The city will adopt an industry cluster approach to business development and will consider financial and technical assistance programs and other tools to retain, expand, and attract businesses in those clusters. Cluster efforts focus on supporting multiple businesses in an industry.

**5.06 Industrial Zoning.**

Industrial zoning under the comprehensive plan will provide the opportunity for the location of industries of various types and uses, including those uses considered essential to the Boulder Valley population from a service standpoint. The zoning ordinance will be updated periodically to assure it is adequately accommodating the existing and future needs of a rapidly changing and technologically-oriented global industrial and services employment base. The city will identify areas that should be protected for industrial and office uses. Where appropriate, mixed use development will be encouraged incorporating residential uses and support services for the employment base.

**5.09 Vital and Productive Retail Base.**

With Boulder's retail role in the region changing, the city and county recognize the need for the city to actively support its retail base.

- a) The city will update its land use regulations to encourage and facilitate private reinvestment and redevelopment of its retail centers. Particular emphasis will be focused on creating opportunities for mixed use centers incorporating retail, entertainment, office and residential uses served by transit.
- b) The city will coordinate its Capital Improvements Program in a manner where public infrastructure investments may be completed in conjunction with approved city adopted plans as incentives to encourage private investments to occur.
- c) The city will support coordinated public/private initiatives at the citywide activity centers, including downtown Boulder and the Boulder Valley Regional Center. It will also consider, depending upon specific circumstances and opportunities/needs, initiatives designed to facilitate mixed use development at community retail centers where appropriate.
- d) The city will develop and implement a retail strategy that will address the market opportunities and shopping needs of the community and identify strategies to improve the retail base and the city's sales tax revenues.

#### **5.10 Funding City Services.**

Consistent with community goals and character, encourage a strong sustainable economy to fund quality city services for the public.

#### **6.02 Reduction of Single Occupancy Auto Trips.**

The city and county will pursue the quality of life goals of residents by promoting greater use of alternatives to single occupancy automobile travel. It is the city's specific objective to continue progress toward 'no long-term growth in traffic' through the year 2025 within the Boulder Valley, while providing for increased mobility through completing the multimodal transportation system.

#### **6.04 Multimodal Strategies.**

The city and county will cooperatively plan multimodal strategies for limiting traffic growth while accommodating increases in anticipated travel. The city may engage neighboring communities and other entities such as the University of Colorado, Boulder Valley School District, and private employers in developing these programs. This will include developing and implementing travel demand management programs reflecting an integrated approach including marketing, education, pass programs, improved facilities and new services.

As part of the city's strategy for growth to pay its own way, new developments will be required to consider and include travel demand management approaches such as the Eco Pass, parking cash out, parking pricing, employer trip reduction programs, flex-time and telecommunicating in their efforts to reduce the Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) produced by the development.

**6.08 Congestion.** The city will increase the efficiency of travel on the street system, develop the non-automotive systems, promote innovative strategies and implement travel demand management strategies to limit the increase in congestion while accommodating the expected increase in travel.

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The city and county will promote the greater use of alternatives to single-occupancy automobile travel with the objective of limiting the extent and duration of congestion, defined as Level of Service (LOS) F, to 20 percent of the roadway system within the Boulder Valley while providing for the expected increase in travel demand.

#### **6.09 Transportation Impact.**

Traffic impacts from a proposed development that cause unacceptable community or environmental impacts or unacceptable reduction in level of service will be mitigated. All development will include strategies to reduce the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) generated by the development.

New development will be designed and built to be multimodal and pedestrian-oriented. Strategies to reduce the VMT generated by new development will include all modes of travel as well as travel management programs such as the Eco Pass. The design of new development will especially focus on providing continuous modal systems through the development, on connecting these systems to those surrounding the development and

on providing connections between the modes. (See Policy 3.05 Growth to Pay Fair Share of New Facility Costs.)

The city will provide tools and resources to help businesses manage employee access and mobility and support public-private partnerships to facilitate these efforts such as transportation management organizations.

**6.10 Multimodal Development.**

The transportation system will accommodate the planned land use pattern, which includes higher densities and mixed use in the core area and activity centers, a variety of densities in the fringe areas, compact community size, and the possibility of one or more city auto-free zones in the future.

Three intermodal centers will be developed or maintained in the downtown, the Boulder Valley Regional Center, and on the university's main campus to anchor these three activity centers to regional transit connections and to serve as hubs for connecting pedestrian, bicycle and local transit to regional services.

The land along multimodal corridors will be designated as multimodal transportation zones when transit service is provided on that corridor. In these multimodal transportation zones, the city will develop parking maximums and encourage parking reductions.

To minimize the negative impacts from automobiles, the city will develop strategies to facilitate and encourage the use of small, fuel efficient automobiles, particularly for urban commuting.

**6.11 Managing Parking Supply.**

The city will actively manage parking supply in the community consistent with the desire to reduce single-occupant vehicle travel and limit congestion. Parking needs will be accommodated in the most efficient way possible with the least number of new parking spaces. The city will promote parking reductions through parking maximums, shared parking, parking districts and parking management programs where appropriate and taking into account impacts to surrounding areas.

**6.13 Neighborhood Streets Connectivity.**

New neighborhood streets will be designed in a well connected and fine-grained pattern of streets and alleys to effectively disperse and distribute vehicle traffic and to promote bike and pedestrian travel.

**6.03 Permanently Affordable Housing.**

The city will increase the proportion of permanently affordable housing units to an overall goal of at least ten percent of the total existing housing stock through regulations, financial subsidies and other incentives. City resources will also be directed toward maintaining existing permanently affordable housing units and securing replacements for lost low and very low income units. The city will continually evaluate existing and potential affordable housing efforts in order to ensure that the continuum of housing needs in the community as well as its affordable

| housing goals can be met.

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**7.06 Mixture of Housing Types.**

The city and county will encourage the private sector to provide and maintain a mixture of housing types with varied price ranges and densities, which attempt to meet the affordability needs of a broad range of the Boulder Valley population. This includes families, essential workers, older adults, persons with disabilities, at-risk children and adults as well as other vulnerable, very low income residents.

**7.09 Balancing Housing Supply with Employment Base.**

Consistent with the city's growth management system, expansion of the Boulder Valley housing supply should reflect to the extent possible, current employer locations, projected industrial/commercial development sites, and the demand such developments bring for housing employees. Key considerations include housing type, mix, and affordability required to house the employee base of current and anticipated employers.

**Goals, Objectives, and Future Direction for the Transit Village Area Plan**

Goals:

1. **Create a well-used and well-loved pedestrian oriented place** of enduring value that serves all of Boulder.
2. **Provide a strong sense of community** for through the design of street blocks, scale of development, creation of public spaces and the connections to them, and variety in scale, land uses, and building types.
3. **Maximize the community benefit of the transit investment:** Locate homes and employment to maximize access to local and regional bus service, future rail, and bus rapid transit and to allow for a transit oriented lifestyle.
4. **Support diversity:** Include land use and travel options that expand opportunities for employees and residents of different incomes, ethnicities, demographics, and different abilities.
5. **Enhance economic vitality:** Increase economic activity for businesses, increase revenues for the city of Boulder, reduce transportation costs for residents and employees, and increase transit ridership for RTD
6. **Connect to the natural environment:** Create a place that reflects Boulder's commitment to environmental sustainability and "green" building.
7. **Engage the public:** Create a place that reflects input from property and business owners, residents and adjacent neighborhoods.

Objectives

The plan should include:

1. A mixture of land uses and intensities that meet Comprehensive Plan policies related to community design, economic vitality, jobs/ housing balance and affordable housing and that optimize transit use. This will include:
  - a. Multiple housing choices, including a variety of housing types at a range of prices from market rate to affordable.
  - b. Multiple employment opportunities.
  - c. Neighborhood-serving retail uses for residents and employees
2. Places with special character that reinforce Boulder's unique identity and sense of place
3. Functional public spaces designed to accommodate the needs, aspirations, and celebrations of diverse ethnic groups.
4. Active walkable streets in a fine grain grid pattern
5. Multi-modal access and mobility within the area and to the rest of Boulder including the Downtown, Twenty Ninth Street, University of Colorado, other employment centers, Goose Creek path, Valmont Park, and other nearby parks
6. A plan for city services including innovative approaches to services such as storm water management
7. Solutions to mitigate traffic impacts
8. Solutions to mitigate environmental impacts
9. Strategies to promote water efficiency and quality improvements
10. Preserving some of the service industrial uses in this area or in another identified location

11. Support and expand the unique mixture of minority -owned businesses in the area
12. Services that support the residents, adjacent neighbors and businesses, such as child care.
13. An implementation plan for short and long term phasing that accommodates change and adjustment based on the future needs of the community.

#### Proposed Direction for the Next Phases of the Project

Based on the results of an expert panel and public input on the opportunities and constraints, the following direction will help guide the next phase of the project:

**1. Transit hub area:** Initial planning should focus on the area in closest proximity to future transit, generally from Valmont south to the ditch south of Pearl Street, from 30<sup>th</sup> Street east to Frontier. To better understand the relationships among the land uses and transportation connections in the area including the transit functions, access to the transit functions -- pedestrian, local bus, bicycle, and auto access--parking, the location of the commuter rail platform, and the transit user movement patterns, the city should develop a framework plan and planning options for the transit hub area.

**2. Retail:** The 29<sup>th</sup> Street project reflects a very large private investment in Boulder's future (130 million dollars.) The transit hub area must support this investment in every way: the area should provide connections for pedestrians and bicyclists to go there easily and efficiently. Future retail uses in the transit village area should be pedestrian-oriented neighborhood-serving uses that do not duplicate 29<sup>th</sup> Street. Large format retail uses could be located further away from the transit hub area-- east of the rail lines, south of Pearl with access from Foothills Highway -- but could negatively impact the desired pedestrian environment for the transit hub area.

**3. Housing:** There is a strong market for market rate and affordable housing in a mix of multi-family/townhouse/ live-work units in Boulder. Enough housing should be provided in locations to create neighborhoods rather than as scattered isolated pockets of residential uses through this area. Initial residential development will not likely attract many family households and is more likely to appeal to those interested in a more urban residential experience. However, as new neighborhoods reach a critical mass, housing options desirable for families such as townhomes may become more viable in the area.

**4. Office:** This area is not a particularly strong office location now. Downtown is Boulder's primary class "A" office location. The area east of the rail lines and north of Goose Creek (i.e. Wilderness Place) is valuable class B office that could possibly be intensified in the future and reoriented to the rail and Goose Creek. Affordable office locations should be identified.

**5. Industrial:** Staff should analyze the role this area plays in providing different types of industrial uses to help identify the amount and type of industrial land uses that should be recommended in the plan.

**6. Service Industrial:** Service industrial uses do not support transit and the future transit investment will result in strong market pressure to drive a conversion from service industrial to mixed uses, including residential. The city should work with existing businesses to develop a plan for transitioning these uses out of the area and to identify alternative locations for service industrial uses.



**7. Unique Identity:** The transit village area should connect to the downtown via Pearl Street and should reinforce Boulder's unique identity. The urban design character of the area should celebrate the core values of Boulder that include:

- Open space and natural corridors and greenways, including Goose Creek and Boulder Creek paths
- Views of the Flatirons and foothills
- The city's multi-modal corridors - the system of roadways, high frequency transit, bikeways, pedestrian and multi-use paths that tie the city together and make it easy to travel within the city and connect to other areas in the region.
- A continuation of the mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented character of Pearl Street east of the downtown into the transit village area. Pearl Street is the "lifeline" and "spine" connecting the downtown to BTV and should extend the familiar character of Boulder to the east.
- Identification of special character areas, including mimicking the street and block pattern found in the older historic areas of Boulder, with smaller block sizes creating a pleasant, walkable environment.
- Recognition that this area will become a new "gateway" to Boulder and should provide a unique welcoming and reinforcing of what sets Boulder apart.
- Exploration of potential locations and uses for the historic train depot to this area.

**8. Density and Scale:** Include a variety of densities in the area. Higher densities will be most appropriate in the transit hub area and at select locations along multi-modal corridors, particularly Pearl and Arapahoe. The Steelyards project is a good model for mixed use in this area, at similar or higher densities in certain locations.

**9. Implementation:** Adoption of an area plan including a transportation connections plan must provide clear policy direction and will be the first step toward establishing an efficient and predictable process. After plan adoption, the city should initiate comprehensive plan changes and a rezoning of the area to be consistent with the direction established in the plan supporting transit and the 29<sup>th</sup> Street investments.

**10. Investment:** All public investments should reinforce and focus the policy direction and should leverage private dollars, particularly in areas more difficult to redevelop. Consider focusing city investment at the transit hub area. An infrastructure plan should create a finer grid of streets and sidewalks and should include a plan for city utilities such as water and sewer lines

**11. Public/ private partnerships:** There are a number of financing tools that have been successfully used in transit-oriented development and include a mix of public and private investment which should be identified for discussion and consideration for implementation of the plan.

**12. Parking:** Due to the excellent multiple transit access opportunities at this location, consider reducing the parking requirements in areas close to transit. Parking requirements should be flexible and reduced as much as possible to reflect the planned pedestrian character and a transit oriented lifestyle.

**13. “Green” Area Planning:** The plan will include “green” planning and urban design concepts and will identify incentives for innovative “green” site planning, architecture, and other sustainable methodologies.

**14. Significance of the city/RTD-owned site:** This is the keystone property strategically located to provide connections between future commuter rail, bus rapid transit, local and regional transit and 29<sup>th</sup> Street, and multimodal connections to the rest of the Boulder community. Providing well thought out connections will be a critical component to the success of the transit hub area and for this new neighborhood. Connections to 29<sup>th</sup> Street, CU, downtown, the Goose Creek multi-use path, the Steelyards and adjacent neighborhoods are all critical connections

**15. Housing:** The city/ RTD-owned site is a good place for housing, particularly adjacent to Goose Creek.

**16. Transit and Parking Uses:** The city and RTD should plan the property in an integrated manner to explore design options meeting current and future transit and parking needs and integration with future phases of development on the site. Any built elements on the site should reinforce the long-term goals of the area plan, accommodate RTD’s needs and be adaptable to future expectations. Proceed carefully with first phase transit developments.